



The recommendations contained within this study are direct results of the expressed desires of residents, businesses and property owners

3.1 OVERVIEW

This section includes recommendations for Ponce de Leon Avenue and Moreland Avenue/Moreland LCI Study Areas. The recommendations define the direction for the future character of the Study Areas and provide short and long-range actions to improve the conditions identified through the public planning process. They also support the Goals and Objectives identified in Section 2: Visioning.

Recommendations are a synthesis of the desires expressed by residents, businesses, property owners, GDOT, the City of Atlanta, MARTA and other stakeholders during the planning process, coupled with sound planning. They are visionary yet achievable blueprint for change that reflect each Study Area's historic nature, limited rights-of-way, strong pedestrian orientation, transit-supportive land uses and high development pressure. To this end, recommendations strengthen the transportation and land use relationship by:

- Improving traffic operations by focussing on more efficient utilization of existing pavement.
- Balancing the regional and state roles and needs of Ponce de Leon and Moreland Avenues with their context and maintaining or improving their vehicular Levels of Service .
- Making existing MARTA transit facilities more user-friendly and efficient.
- Balancing the citywide need to focus mixed-use development into corridors with potential impacts on neighborhoods.
- Establishing a series of pedestrian-oriented mixed-use nodes that build on historic or existing nodes.

With time, Study recommendations will transform Ponce de Leon and Moreland Avenues into dynamic walkable urban corridors with: wide, tree-lined sidewalks; preserved historic structures; quality transit service; safe and smooth traffic flow; human-scaled buildings; and social diversity. This vision also extends to nearby transit stations, where transit-supportive land uses enhance neighborhoods and reduce auto-dependence.

Recommendations are organized by Study Area and include: Transportation; Land Use; Environment, Infrastructure & Facilities; and Urban Design & Historic Resources. Recommendations include policies and projects, as applicable. Projects are following by a project number as identified in Section 4: Action Plan, which contains a strategy for implementing these recommendations, including cost, funding and responsible parties. Section 4 also includes details on proposed 15 Year Future Land Use Plan Map and zoning changes.



The Ponce de Leon Avenue Study Area must support a variety of transportation options, including bicycling



Figure 3.1: Potential long term street location, with redevelopment

3.2 PONCE DE LEON AVENUE

The overall goal for Ponce de Leon Avenue is to recognize and respect its long-standing eclectic and diverse character, while removing key liabilities and establishing a framework for future growth that balances the needs of the avenue's varied constituents.

Transportation Recommendations

These recommendations are organized into Street & Block Patterns, Traffic Systems, Transit, Pedestrian Systems, and Bicycle Facilities.

Recommendations recognize the important role of Ponce de Leon Avenue in the regional and state roadway network, while also supporting the desired land use patterns and local accessibility.

Street and Block Pattern Recommendations

The interconnected street system and the small blocks should be preserved and protected in the Study Area. They provide multi-modal accessibility and are part of what makes the corridor urban.

Street and Block Pattern Policies

- Prohibit street abandonments or closures as part of new development, unless new streets are created with equal or greater connectivity to the existing street grid.
- Utilize traffic calming to minimize the impacts of cut through traffic on neighborhoods, rather than street closures.
- Support new streets across the Belt Line at such time as it is developed into a transit greenway.
- Provide public pedestrian and bicycle access to the Belt Line from adjacent areas.
- Support long-term development a street connecting Monroe Drive to Ponce de Leon Avenue, through the current Midtown Place and Midtown Promenade shopping centers.

Within the next 20 years it is likely that both shopping centers will be obsolete and redeveloped into more urban, mixed-use pedestrian-oriented extensions of the Midtown neighborhood. When this occurs, plans should include a street running from Ponce de Leon Avenue to Monroe Drive.

Because they are not likely to redevelop at the same time, the first redevelopment should built said street to the adjacent property line, while the later project could tie in at said location at a future point in time.

Medians

The benefits of medians include creating safer and shorter pedestrian crossings, discouraging mid-block crossings (if pedestrian access is prohibited across the median), minimizing mid-block turning conflicts, and reducing through traffic queuing and delay caused by left turning traffic.

Drawbacks include the possible need for rights-of-way, negotiations with businesses, and loss of left turns. However, in an urban setting with a street grid, the impacts of limited left turns can be mitigated by utilizing other access routes.

Traffic System Recommendations

Traffic recommendations are aimed at reducing car/pedestrian conflict, improving safety, and supporting driving at the speed limit.

Traffic System Policies

- Encourage high density housing within walking distance of retail and transit to reduce the need to drive.
- Limit vehicular access to alleys and side streets via zoning requirements. See map below for potential locations.
- Require access management with new development, which may include right-in/right-out islands and shared driveways.
- Amend Public Works standards to permit new multifamily and commercial uses to use existing alleys.
- Amend Public Works standards to remove the requirement for alleys and driveways to be set 7 feet from side property lines, even if zoning permits it.
- Work with GDOT to ensure that acceleration and deceleration lanes are not required on new developments if access must be provided from Ponce de Leon Avenue.

Traffic System Projects

- Install a 4-foot wide median between Penn and Argonne Avenues. (PT-8)
A median could be realized by moving the northern curb as part of the redevelopment of the adjacent vacant lot.
- Install a 2 to 4-foot median between Hunt Street and Charles Allen Drive/Parkway Drive. (PT-9)
- Install a 2 to 4-foot median between Charles Allen Drive/Parkway Drive and Monroe Drive/Boulevard. (PT-10)
- Install a 2 to 4 median between Monroe Drive/Boulevard and

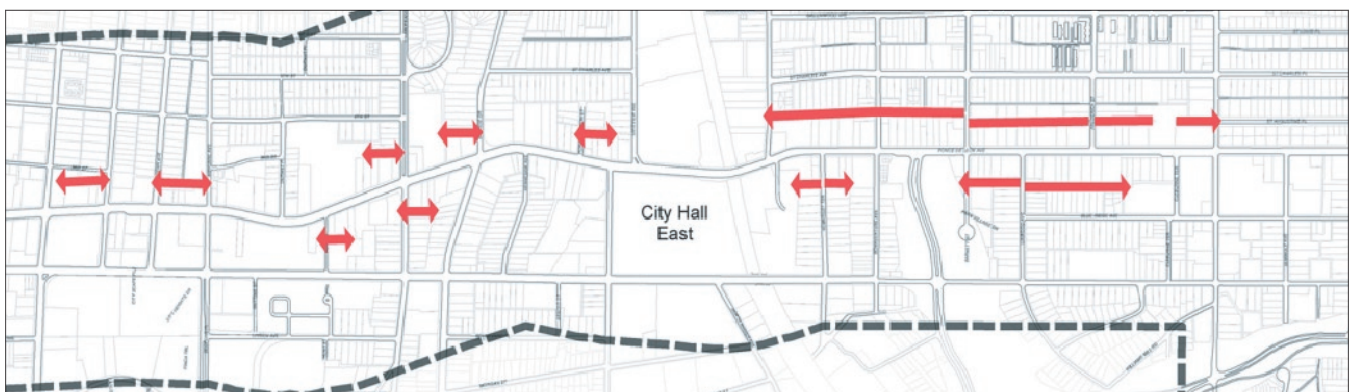
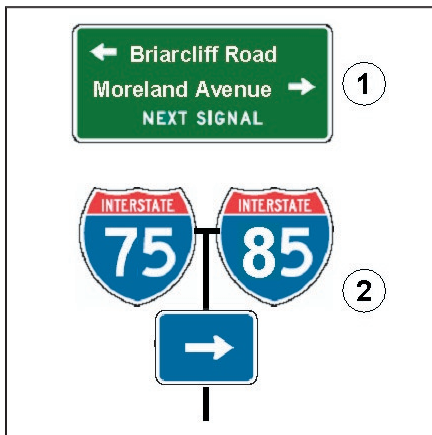


Figure 3.2: Map showing locations where private alleys may be feasible with redevelopment



Ponce de Leon Avenue at Freedom Parkway



Samples of signs providing directional information for interstates and major roads



Example of a street before and after median installation

Kennesaw Avenue. (PT-11)

This median could be achieved by removing the current northern deceleration lane as well as land purchases.

- Install a 7 to 12-foot median by City Hall East. (PT-12)

A planted median would prevent illegal left turns into Midtown Place Shopping Center. It could be realized by moving the southern curb as part of the redevelopment of City Hall East.

- Perform signal upgrades. (PT-14)

One of the most effective ways to improve traffic operations without road widening is through enhanced signal coordination and timing. This is not intended to increase vehicle speeds; improved signal timing creates a coordinated progression of a platoon of vehicles to travel the corridor at a predetermined speed, which is often less than the posted speed limit. The existing equipment for the traffic signals on Ponce de Leon Avenue is last generation's. Replacement of the hardware, including LED traffic signal heads, using the latest advances in video detection, installing the current industry standard controllers, and upgrading the interconnect to fiber optic, can position the corridor to maximize traffic efficiencies.

- Develop signal timing coordination plans. (PT-14)
- Install mast arm traffic signal poles as part of streetscape. (PT-1, PT-2, PT-3, PT-4)

See Pedestrian Recommendations for details.

- Install signs to provide directional information to interstates, major streets (including Moreland Avenue) and commercial nodes, such as Little Five Points, Virginia-Highland, or East Atlanta Village. (PT-16)
- Target the Study Area for traffic law enforcement. (PO-5)

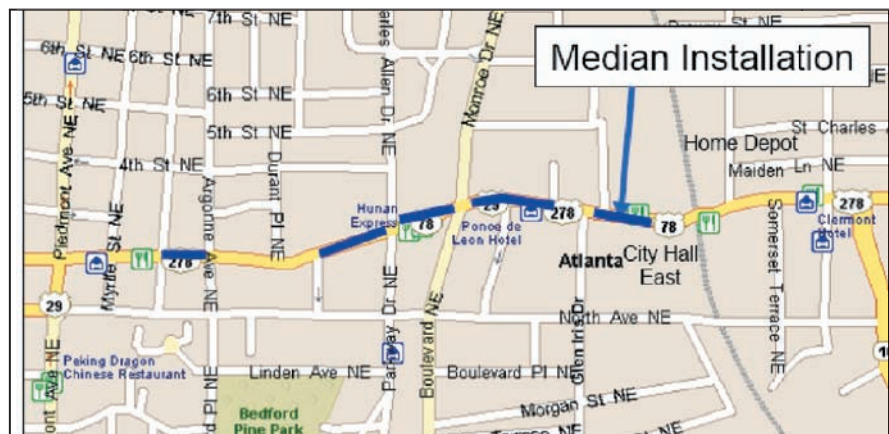


Figure 3.3: Proposed median locations

**Minimal Bus Improvements
Increase Ridership in
Arlington County, Virginia**

New Urban News
January/February 2004
page 24

Last fall, ridership on a Metrobus route in Arlington County, Virginia, suddenly jumped 30 percent. The reason? At 22 bus stops on the route, the county installed displays of the bus schedule and a laminated drawing of the bus route overlaid on a local street map.

“We had people stopping to read the schedules while we were putting them up,” James R. Hamre, the county’s transit program coordinator, told the *Washington Post*.

Basic bus information like this can attract potential riders. The display boxes cost the county \$76 each.

Transit Recommendations

Ponce de Leon Avenue was developed around a trolley route, yet today’s transit service is mediocre, at best. Recommendations are aimed at improving current transit service in a conservative and cost effective manner, while laying the foundation for future, more extensive transit upgrades.

Transit Policies

- Support the establishment of a Belt Line transit stop at City Hall East/Ponce de Leon Avenue.
- Recognize that enhanced bus service (see below) could be a pre-cursor to potential light rail or trolley service implemented as part of the MARTA Inner Core/C-Loop Study.
- Require new bus shelters to be located in the street furniture and tree planting zone of the sidewalk, rather than blocking the clear zone.

Transit Projects

- Create enhanced bus service along the corridor. (PT-17)

Enhanced bus service strives to make existing buses operate more like trains. It includes reducing the number of stops and constructing shelters at remaining stops, including seating, schedules, maps, and trash cans. It also includes implementing mandatory stops at all stops. Where proposed stops are within a deceleration lane, they should be located at the start of the lane, to allow cars to pass them to turn right.

Enhanced service improves the bus experience for riders by making buses more reliable, easier to understand, and more efficient. The mandatory stops means that buses take the same amount of time to travel a corridor regardless of

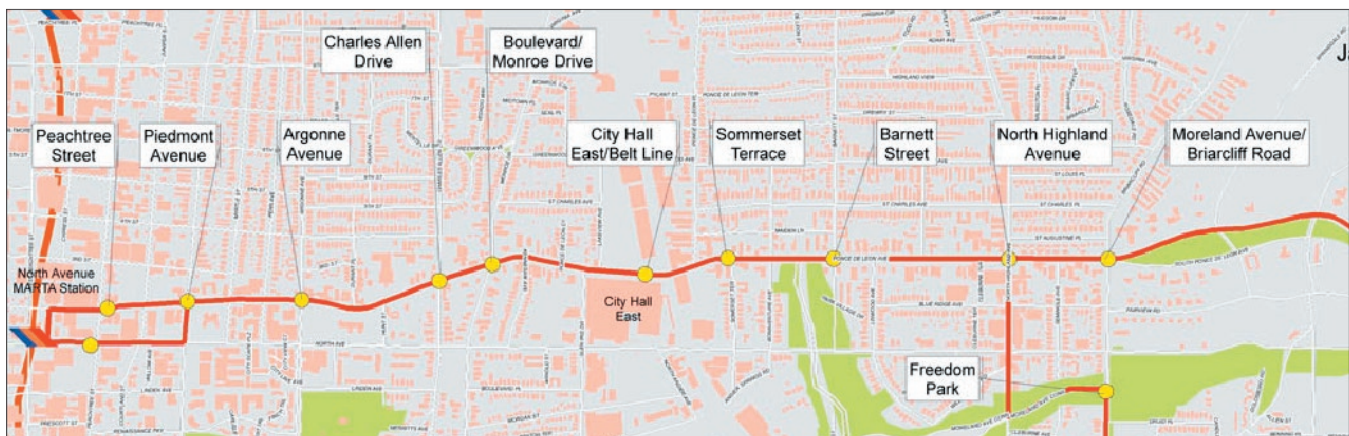


Figure 3.4: Map showing general locations where bus stop should be provided under the enhanced scenario



In Germany enhanced bus service is provides a user-friendly system



Improved bus transit could lay the way for future light rail or trolley service on the corridor

whether 5 people ride or 50. It also ensures new riders that buses will stop for them, should they not understand how to signal for a stop.

- Implement a bus signal prioritization program as part of signal upgrades. (PT-14)
- Extend MARTA bus route #48 service from Moreland Avenue to the North Avenue MARTA station via Freedom Parkway, Highland Avenue and Ponce de Leon Avenue. (PT-18)

As part of recent service modifications route #48 was discontinued north of DeKalb Avenue. This is likely due to poor ridership along the suburban areas of Briarcliff Road.

Extending the route to Ponce de Leon Avenue and the North Avenue rail station would connect Ponce de Leon Avenue to Moreland Avenue and fill a critical transit need. It would also provide greater bus headways along Ponce de Leon Avenue between Peachtree Street and North Highland Avenue - the area where transit demand is the greatest due to the most transit-supportive land use patterns.

- Remove parking from the south side of Ponce de Leon Avenue between Peachtree and West Peachtree Streets to create an eastbound, bus-only lane. (PT-20)

Because Ponce de Leon Avenue is westbound west of Peachtree Street, eastbound buses are forced to use North and Piedmont Avenues before turning onto Ponce de Leon Avenue. This not only makes the route psychologically confusing, it also increases delay during rush hour when buses must wait to turn left onto Piedmont Avenue due to high traffic volumes.

Creating a contra-lane would reduce delays and provide a route that is easy to comprehend for new riders.



Zoning required this project to have a 15 foot sidewalk but fenced outdoor dining now results in a 4 foot clear zone - too narrow for the avenue

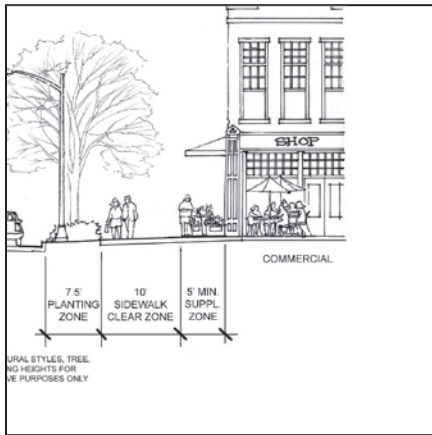


Figure 3.5: Non-residential streetscape west of Freedom Parkway

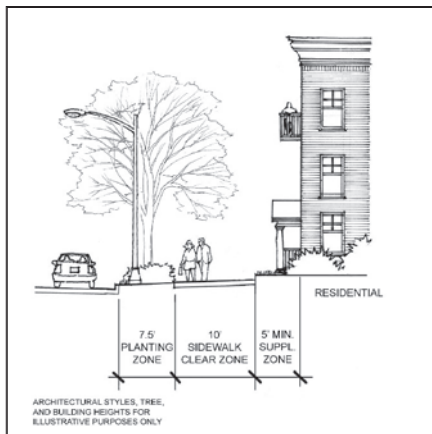


Figure 3.6: Residential streetscape west of Freedom Parkway

Pedestrian Recommendations

The pedestrian system should be improved along Ponce de Leon Avenue. The following recommendations are intended to encourage walking along the corridor.

Pedestrian Policies

- Establish new streetscapes with redevelopment east of Freedom Parkway, which include a 7 foot unpaved street furniture and tree planting zone (excluding curb), a 10 foot clear zone and a 20 foot (15 foot east of North Highland Avenue) landscaped supplemental zone adjacent to sidewalk level residential.
- Establish new streetscapes with redevelopment east of Freedom Parkway, which include a 7 foot unpaved street furniture and tree planting zone (excluding curb), a 10 foot clear zone and a minimum 5 foot hardscaped supplemental zone adjacent to sidewalk level non-residential.
- Establish new streetscapes with redevelopment west of Freedom Parkway, which include a 7 foot unpaved street furniture and tree planting zone (excluding curb), a 10 foot clear zone and a minimum 5 foot landscaped supplemental zone adjacent to sidewalk level residential.
- Establish new streetscapes with redevelopment west of Freedom Parkway, which include a 7 foot unpaved street furniture and tree planting zone (excluding curb), a 10 foot clear zone and a minimum 5 foot hardscaped supplemental zone adjacent to sidewalk level non-residential.
- Provide a protected pedestrian walk phase or leading phase at signalized intersections.
- Enforce current requirements for owners to maintain the

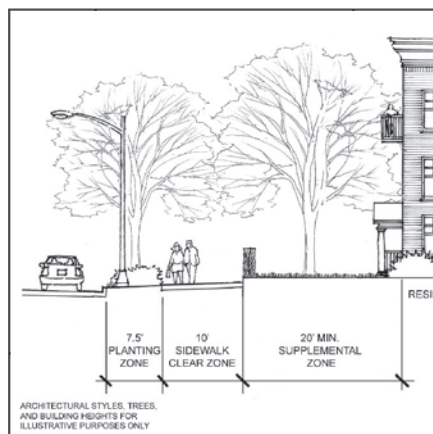


Figure 3.7: Residential streetscape east of Freedom Parkway

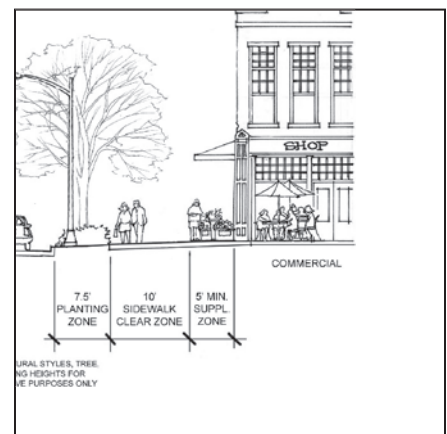
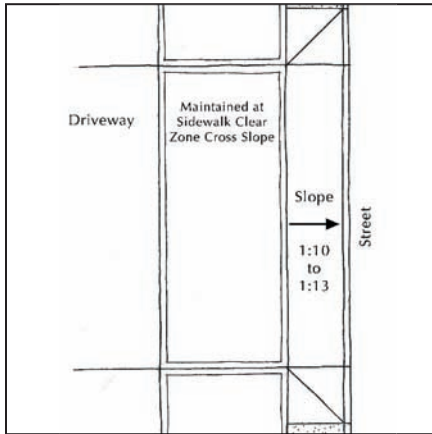
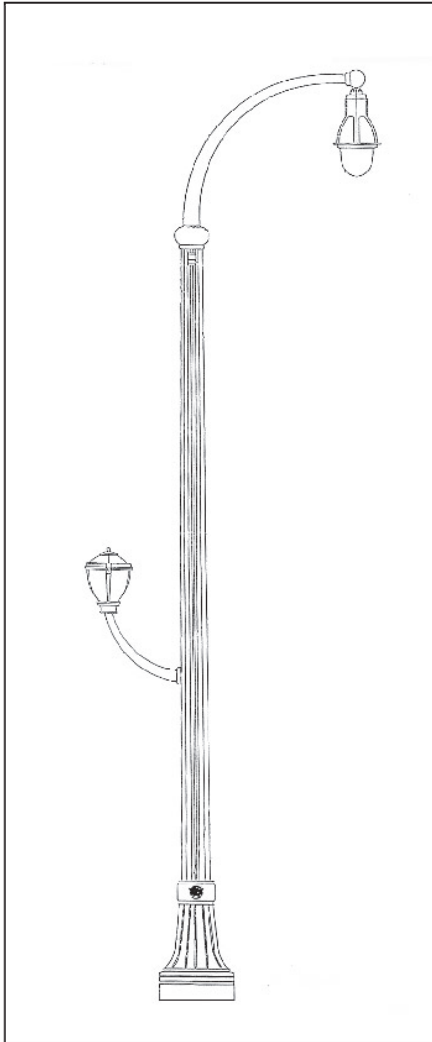


Figure 3.8: Non-residential streetscape east of Freedom Parkway



Sidewalk clear zones must maintain a consistent cross slope, even at driveways



A hybrid light with street and pedestrian luminaires is encouraged

sidewalks in front of their property.

- Adopt the Georgia Department of Transportation *Pedestrian and Streetscape Guide* and *Traffic Signal Design Guidelines* as the design guides for the City of Atlanta. (PO-4)
- Ensure that all sidewalks and ramps are compliant with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Sidewalks must maintain a consistent sidewalk clear zone cross slope (maximum 2%), even at driveways.

- Require all portions of public street-serving sidewalks, even when their width extends onto private property, to be held to the same design and accessibility standards as the portion within the public right-of-way.

Current practice by some City of Atlanta departments allows zoning-required sidewalks clear zones located on private property to be blocked by driveway ramps, stairs, fences and other such elements.

- Require new sidewalks to be 35 PSI broom finished concrete with standard expansions joints not exceeding 20 feet on center and crack control joints 5 feet on center.
- Utilize pedestrian countdown signals at all signalized crossings.
- Utilize two sidewalk ramps at intersection corners.

Ramps should direct pedestrians to crosswalks. This can only be achieved by providing two ramps per corner. When only one ramp is provided pedestrians are pointed towards the middle of the intersection.



An example of pedestrian countdown signals



Highly visible Duratherm crosswalks were used in this San Diego intersection (photo courtesy StreetPrint Decorative Asphalt Solutions)

Pedestrian Projects

- Require property owners to repair sidewalks including, but not limited to, at: the Peters Mansion block, Eats, and between the Massellton and Myrtle Street. (PT-5, PT-6, PT-7)
- Require property owners to repair sidewalks in front of Green's Liquors. (PT-26)

This should include repair of broken sidewalks and installing wheel stops, landscaping and trees between the parking and the sidewalk to prevent patrons from parking on the sidewalk.

- Clean and maintain sidewalk under the Belt Line. (PT-21)
- Open a bicycle and pedestrian connection from Midtown Place shopping center to Midtown Promenade. (PT-15)
- Restripe all crosswalks and add pedestrian crossing signs to alert drivers prior to implementing the streetscape. (PT-25)
- Develop a corridor-long streetscape in existing right-of-way. (PT-1, PT-2, PT-3, PT-4)

The existing right-of-way is 9 to 15 feet per side in most areas. Within this area a streetscape project should be undertaken

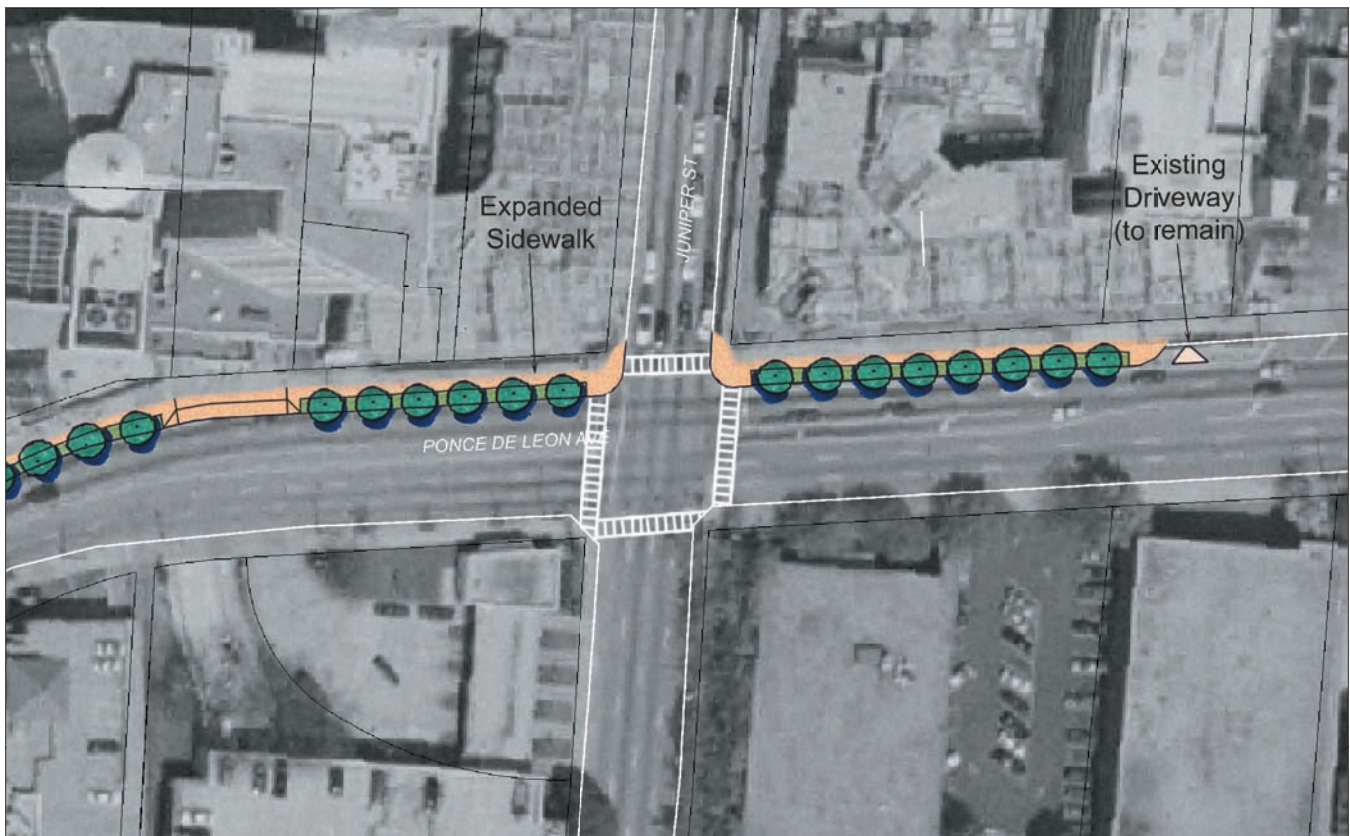


Figure 3.9: Recommended streetscape near Juniper Street



Bulbouts at Penn Avenue and Ponce de Leon Avenue will improve the pedestrian environment by reducing the crossing distance and better defining where car and pedestrian separation

which includes street trees in a minimum four feet wide unpaved street furniture and tree planting zone adjacent to the curb, hybrid pedestrian/roadway lighting, new plane concrete sidewalks, crosswalk upgrades, buried utilities, signal mast arms, and curb cut consolidations.

New crosswalks should be highly visible. The State Materials and Research Engineer has recommended approval of the street pavement texturing system Duratherm. This product is recommended for Ponce de Leon Avenue.

Improvements between Myrtle Street and Penn Avenue should include bulbouts on the north and a right-turn only sign for westbound traffic. At Juniper Street plans include expanding the sidewalk on the north, into unused roadway.

- Open a pedestrian connection from Midtown Place shopping center to Lakeview Street. (PT-24)

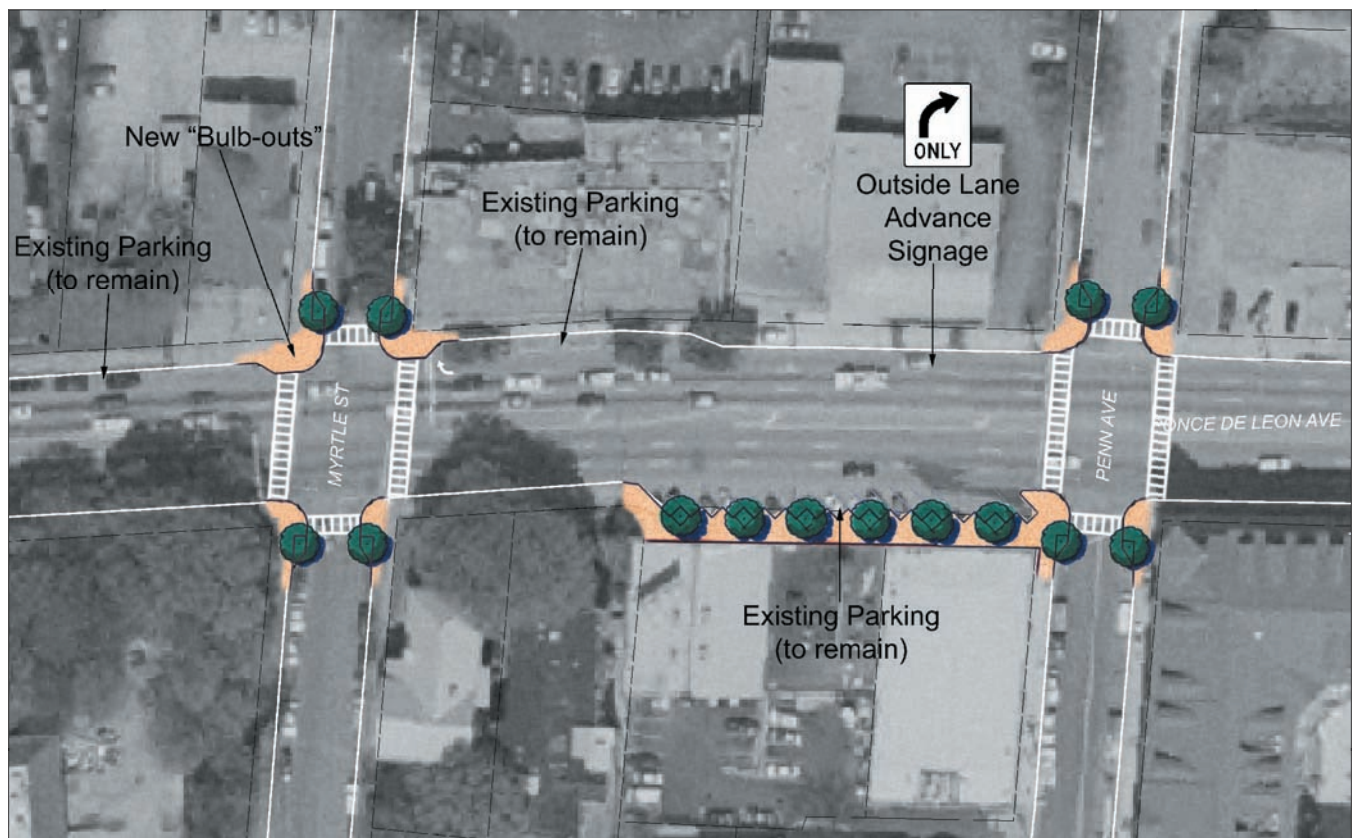


Figure 3.10: Recommended streetscape between Myrtle Street and Penn Avenue